

REMARKS

Claims 1, 3 and 5 are pending in the present application.

Rejection under 35 U.S.C. §103 (a)

Claims 1, 3 and 5 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as unpatentable over U.S. Patent 6,841,304 to Michot, et al. Applicants respectfully disagree.

Michot et al '304 describes ionic compounds which are an ionic liquid. However, the composition comprising the ionic compounds disclosed in Michot '304 is the electrolytic composition (See for example, claim 2 and column 2, lines 53-57). Since the composition of Michot '304 is the electrolytic composition, one of ordinary skill in the art would not consider a rubber member having a stable shape and rubber elasticity, as in the present invention, based upon the composition of Michot '304.

As described above, the composition of Michot '304 is the electrolytic composition. Furthermore, the composition described in Michot '304 has a high ionic liquid content. (See for example, Example 15 (60 wt%), Example 16 (40 wt %) and Example 17 (45%) of Michot '304). Thus, by its very nature, the electrolytic composition of Michot '304 has poor strength. Furthermore, this is further supported from the fact that the electrolytic composition in Michot '304 is used with a polypropylene support as shown in Examples 15-17.

The present invention teaches vulcanized rubber member having a stable shape. Therefore, Michot '304 teaches away from the present invention and would not render the present invention obvious.

In contrast to Michot '304, the present invention teaches a moderately resistive rubber member in which the ionic liquid is added in an amount of 0.1 to 20 parts by weight with respect to 100 parts by weight of the unvulcanized rubber base. A rubber member has a stable shape such as an electrophotographic sensitive member; a transfer drum or a transfer belt, which is employed in a transfer process; an intermediate transport belt; or a developing blade, a

developing roll, or a charge-imparting roll, which is employed in a developing process described in [0002] US2005/0143499 of the present specification. In addition, a rubber member invariably has rubber elasticity. Therefore, the rubber member of the present invention is very different from the electrolytic composition of Michot '304, and the present invention is not obvious from Michot '304.

Two final points in response to the Examiner's statements in section 3 of the Office Action: if the monomer unit is cross-linked, it is not always true that the cross-linked polymer is rubber member. Finally, if the ionic liquid is added to unvulcanized rubber base in large amount as described in Michot '304, the resulting rubber member does not have enough strength and stable shape for a rubber member, and would not have moderately resistance.

Therefore, the present invention should not be considered obvious from the limited teachings of Michot '304.

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Conclusion

Based on the Amendments and Remarks above, Applicant respectfully requests allowance of claims 1, 3, and 5.

Respectfully submitted,
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